



Call for Action for Anti-Racism in School Psychology Training Programs

As an organization formed for the purposes of advancing school psychology training and the professional growth of school psychology faculty members, the Trainers of School Psychologists (TSP) stand committed to social justice and anti-racist work. However, given the nature of structural and systemic racism, we recognize that this work is best accomplished not in isolation - but through sustained dialogue, planning, and collaboration across the profession. To that end, TSP is in communication with leaders of associations and organizations across the field of school psychology (e.g., CDSPP, NASP, D16/APA, SSSP, AASP, SASP, etc.) to identify collaborative efforts that will guide, inform, and shape anti-racist work for the field in the years to come.

TSP expresses both outrage and deep despair regarding the recent, unjustified killings of Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, Dreasjon (Sean) Reed, George Floyd, and Tony McDade. Our thoughts are with the communities impacted by these killings. Although well-intentioned, we acknowledge that thoughts are not enough. As a group charged with training the next generation of school psychologists, we have a personal responsibility and a moral and ethical mandate to take action. We must engage in our own individual work to mitigate our implicit biases and take intentional steps to directly address institutional racism and bigotry of all types, which have no place in our schools and graduate training programs. We must stand unwaveringly with our Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) colleagues and students during this unspeakably tragic time, fueled by hundreds of years of racism, specifically targeting Black individuals in our country's history.

In 2016 and 2019, TSP issued statements in response to hateful rhetoric targeting historically, oppressed, minoritized, and religious communities. We encourage members to revisit the position statements crafted in 2016 and 2019 for resources to train graduate students to be injustice disruptors and agents of change. Again in 2020, TSP continues to stand with communities and individuals traumatized by white supremacy practices but realizes that words are not enough; we must take action.

We, as trainers, must take specific actions and hold one another accountable in order to reduce the suffering of BIPOC communities and to reduce the undue burden on these communities to act alone in bringing forth positive change. Today, in solidarity with Black scholar-leaders and community leaders from across the country, TSP is taking a stand to call for action on racism. We need to commit to lasting change for our BIPOC faculty, our graduate students, and the PK-12 students, families, and educators that they will ultimately serve.

Call for Action for Trainers

The first step in our call to action is for TSP leadership and members to listen. In saying so, TSP commits to **listen** to our faculty of color, and elevate the voices of leaders of color within our field, related disciplines, and society that have given their time and talents to push this critical work forward with little to no support at times. Next, TSP commits to **learn**. As a professional learning community, we see this as an integral role that our organization can fulfill now and in the future. TSP also recognizes that this learning must be in the service of **making change** and taking action moving forward. This is the day-to-day work we each must take to recognize racism, white privilege, and the intersection in our training and daily behaviors.

To become more comfortable with discussions of race and racism, we must be intentional and purposeful in our efforts to grow. TSP urges our membership to act now:

- ***Begin today with yourself.*** Begin, renew, or recommit to your personal journey to explore racism and privilege. Engage in intentional learning and embrace that the work will be difficult, and feelings of shame, guilt and anger are to be expected. Consider journaling, reading, organizing a book club, or taking whatever action is needed now to address your status and white supremacy. Explore resources to better support and serve as a mentor, and colleague, to BIPOC students and faculty. TSP's website will host a training and resource page on racism and diversity. Use these tools with yourself first.
- ***I see you.*** Reach out to faculty and students of color. This is an emotional and traumatic time for communities. Let them know they are seen by you. Ask what supports you can provide right now while being sensitive to not center conversations on personal needs to process.
- ***Identify immediate needs.*** Host virtual meetings now with students. Determine what they need. How can you as a program/trainer support your students during this time?
- ***Talk to your kids.*** Start talking about race and inequality with your children. Opening the door to a continuous and open dialogue about race is an immediate action to increase your comfort with discussions of race that can carry over into your role as a trainer, mentor, and friend.

- ***Explore the dynamics of your training program.*** Take time to develop an assessment for identifying student and faculty needs and burdens on faculty and students of color within your training program. How are you making a long-term impact and affecting change? This work is not short-term. Make the effort to contribute to valuable work over longer periods of time.
- ***Focus your training program around social justice and advocacy.***
 - Call to Action: Sign statements for supporting anti-racist work among trainers and students.
 - Call to Action: Faculty should call meetings with students regarding immediate messaging that you wish to share on your program's plan
 - Call to Action: Review resources and supports to incorporate into your curriculum. Co-create initiatives and offer ongoing learning opportunities based on student and faculty input such as book clubs that could extend over the summer for students.

TSP's Call to Action

As an organization, TSP, also commits to creating safe spaces for both BIPOC faculty and white allies, and opportunities for professional development centered on anti-racist work in the short and long-term. This cannot be a short-lived, reactive, one-time statement. Our previous statements suggest that this work needs to be ongoing. We must work diligently and consistently to grow as an organization in this work. Our goal is to be intentional and thoughtful in making plans to support our membership in advancing personal and professional development on race, racism, inequalities, oppression, and social justice. Our initial plans are outlined below. This is only the start to a purposeful plan of action. We will continue to seek feedback from our membership and make adjustments, based on this feedback, as we move forward.

- The SPTRAIN listserv has served as a starting point for listening, learning, and initiating change. It is our commitment to maintain a safe, supportive, and respectful environment to begin the reflective dialogue we need to have as trainers.
- TSP will host a "Series on Race" facilitated by external anti-racism trainers through restorative practices. We believe it is important that those asked to facilitate come from outside our training community and be co-facilitated by individuals of color and individuals who are white. There will be a live series for BIPOC faculty, white faculty, and a group meeting.
- From the "Series on Race," TSP will identify goals and action steps for additional personal and professional development for school psychology trainers to begin or deepen their anti-racism work. We will also collaborate with content experts in our field to discuss how best to translate these learnings into individual courses and the multicultural training embedded within training programs. This is part of a longer-term plan to co-create strategic goals and implement them over time.

- TSP will curate a compendium of resources that will be shared on the TSP website to support faculty and graduate students to have the difficult, but necessary conversations around race, racism, bias, and privilege. Resources will include those to foster one's own personal and professional development with the ultimate goal of implementing more equitable practices within graduate training programs and increasing the diversity of school psychology and the retention of BIPOC faculty in the field.

TSP whole-heartedly believes that the time for an intentional call to action is long overdue and must be sustained long after the current unrest in this country. The time to listen, learn, and act is now. During these traumatic times, we ask our members to raise our community up by using their power and privilege to take a stance against injustices impacting our BIPOC colleagues and the students that we serve. As an organization, we are guided by our mission to promote diversity and excellence in school psychology graduate training. This is not possible without dismantling structural and systematic racism. Now more than ever, we understand this. In joining together, our shared community can help to bring about the positive change that is possible after trauma. In order to do so, it is essential we take a long, hard look at ourselves, our fellow trainers, and our programs to determine actionable steps for improvement and then hold ourselves and each other accountable to see those changes through.